

REMARKS/ARGUMENTS

Claims 8-21 are pending in this application. By this Amendment, Applicant amends Claims 8, 9, 14, 15, and 19 and adds new Claim 21.

Applicant appreciates the courtesies extended by the Examiner in the Telephone Interview on October 29, 2009. In the Telephone Interview, Applicant's counsel explained the features of the present invention and the differences between the applied prior art (primarily Sakai (U.S. 2001/0026345)) and the present invention. The Examiner explained his interpretation of the alleged teachings of Sakai. Specifically, the Examiner explained that he is interpreting Sakai as teaching an internal conductor pattern 26, 28 having a second land, defined by the entire connecting land 29 as shown in Fig. 1 of Sakai, at one end of the internal conductor pattern 26, 28 and a first land, defined by only the portion of the connecting land 29 that is connected to the via-hole conductor 25 as shown in Fig. 1 of Sakai, at the other end of the internal conductor pattern 26, 28, such that the second land is larger than the first land. No agreement was reached during the interview with respect to whether or not Sakai teaches or suggests each and every feature recited in Applicant's Claims 8 and 14.

Claims 9, 15, and 19 were rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 112, second paragraph, for allegedly being indefinite. Claims 9, 15, and 19 have been amended to correct the informalities noted by the Examiner. Accordingly, Applicant respectfully requests reconsideration and withdrawal of this rejection.

Claims 8, 10, 14, and 16 were rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 102 (b) as being anticipated by Sakai. Claims 9, 11-13, 15, and 18-20 were rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) as being unpatentable over Sakai in view of Maeda et al. (U.S. 2005/0122699). Claim 17 was rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) as being unpatentable over Sakai in view of Niwa et al (U.S. 4,237,606). Applicant respectfully traverses the rejections of Claims 8-20.

Claim 8 has been amended to recite:

A laminated ceramic electronic component comprising:
a plurality of ceramic sheets, each including an internal conductor pattern having a first land at one end of the internal conductor pattern and

a second land at the other end of the internal conductor pattern and having a via hole provided therein, the plurality of ceramic sheets being laminated to define a laminate; wherein

- the via hole is filled with a conductive material;
- the internal conductor patterns disposed on different ones of the plurality of ceramic sheets are electrically connected to each other through the via hole;
- the first land is arranged so as to cover the via hole and the first land provided in one of the plurality of ceramic sheets is electrically connected to the second land provided in another of the plurality of ceramic sheets through the via hole provided in the one ceramic sheet;

the area of the via hole is less than an area of the first land and an area of the second land; and

the area of the second land is greater than the area of the first land.

Applicant's Claims 14 recites features that are similar to the features recited in Applicant's Claim 8, including the above-emphasized feature.

As described above, the Examiner alleged that Sakai teaches all of the features recited in Applicant's Claims 8 and 14, including an internal conductor pattern 26, 28 having a second land, defined by the entire connecting land 29 as shown in Fig. 1 of Sakai, at one end of the internal conductor pattern 26, 28 and a first land, defined by only the portion of the connecting land 29 that is connected to the via-hole conductor 25 as shown in Fig. 1 of Sakai, at the other end of the internal conductor pattern 26, 28, such that the second land is larger than the first land.

Although Applicant respectfully disagrees with the Examiner's interpretation of the alleged teachings of Sakai, in order to expedite prosecution of the present application, Applicant's Claim 8 has been amended to recite the features of "the area of the via hole is less than an area of the first land and an area of the second land" and "the area of the second land is greater than the area of the first land." Applicant's Claim 14 has been similarly amended. Support for these features is found, for example, in paragraphs [0027] to [0029] of Applicant's originally filed Substitute Specification and in Fig. 2 of Applicant's originally filed drawings.

Even if Sakai could be fairly construed as teaching or suggesting the features of an internal conductor pattern 26, 28 having a second land, defined by the entire connecting land 29 as shown in Fig. 1 of Sakai, at one end of the internal conductor pattern 26, 28 and a first land, defined by only the portion of the connecting land 29 that is connected to the via-hole conductor 25 as shown in Fig. 1 of Sakai, at the other end of the internal conductor pattern 26, 28, such that the second land is larger than the first land, as alleged by the Examiner, Sakai still fails to teach or suggest each and every feature recited in Applicant's Claims 8 and 14.

Particularly, at best, Sakai teaches a via-hole conductor 25 having an area that is **exactly the same** as the area of the alleged first land of Sakai, and certainly fails to teach or suggest the feature of "the area of the via hole is less than an area of the first land and an area of the second land" as recited in Applicant's Claim 8, and similarly in Applicant's Claim 14. In view of the Examiner's interpretation of the structure of Sakai that defines the first land, i.e., only the portion of the connecting land 29 that is connected to the via-hole conductor 25, the area of the via-hole conductor 25 of Sakai **must** be exactly the same as the area of the alleged first land of Sakai, and Sakai could not possibly be interpreted as teaching or suggesting the feature of "the area of the via hole is less than an area of the first land and an area of the second land" as recited in Applicant's Claim 8, and similarly in Applicant's Claim 14.

Thus, Sakai clearly fails to teach or suggest the features of "the area of the via hole is less than an area of the first land and an area of the second land" and "the area of the second land is greater than the area of the first land" as recited in Applicant's Claim 8, and similarly in Applicant's Claim 14.

Accordingly, Applicant respectfully requests reconsideration and withdrawal of the rejection of Claims 8 and 14 under 35 U.S.C. § 102(b) as being anticipated by Sakai.

The Examiner relied upon Maeda et al. and Niwa et al. to allegedly cure various deficiencies of Sakai. However, Maeda et al. and Niwa et al. fail to teach or suggest the features of "the area of the via hole is less than an area of the first land and an area of the second land" and "the area of the second land is greater than the area of the first

land.” recited in Applicant’s Claim 8, and similarly in Applicant’s Claims 14. Therefore, Maeda et al. and Niwa et al. fail to cure the deficiencies of Sakai described above.

New Claim 21, which is dependent upon Claim 14, has been added. Support for the feature recited in Claim 21 can be found, for example, in paragraph [0026] of Applicant’s originally filed Substitute Specification.

Accordingly, Applicant respectfully submits that Sakai, Maeda et al., and Niwa et al., applied alone or in combination, fail to teach or suggest the unique combination and arrangement of features recited in Applicant’s Claims 8 and 14.

In view of the foregoing amendments and remarks, Applicant respectfully submits that Claims 8 and 14 are allowable. Claims 9-13 and 15-21 depend upon Claims 8 and 14, and are therefore allowable for at least the reasons that Claims 8 and 14 are allowable.

In view of the foregoing amendments and remarks, Applicant respectfully submits that this application is in condition for allowance. Favorable consideration and prompt allowance are solicited.

The Commissioner is authorized to charge any shortage in fees due in connection with the filing of this paper, including extension of time fees, to Deposit Account No. 50-1353.

Respectfully submitted,

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